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April 22, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: Melvin A. Eisenberg

SUBJECT: Conference of April 21, 1964, to determine which frames in the Zapruder movies show the impact of the first and second bullets.

On Tuesday, April 21, 1964, a conference was held to determine which frames in the Zapruder film portray the instants at which the first and second bullets struck.

Present were: Dr. F. W. Light, Jr., Deputy Chief of the Biophysics Division and Chief of the Wound Ballistics Branch of the Biophysics Division at Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland; Dr. Olivier, Chief the Wound Ballistics Branch of the Biophysics Division at Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland; Dr. Joseph Rolin, Consultant to the Biophysics Division at Edgewood Arsenal; Dr. Charles F. Gregory and Dr. Robert Shaw of Parkland Hospital, Dallas, Texas; Messrs. Gauthier, Shanzybolt, and one other unidentified agent of the FBI; and Messrs. Redlich, Specter, Rolin and Eisenberg. Later in the proceedings, Governor and Mrs. Connally, Mr. Rankin and Mr. McCloy joined the conference.

A screening was held of the Zapruder film and of slides prepared by LIFE from the film. Each slide corresponded with a separate frame of film, beginning with frame 171. The consensus of the meeting was as follows:

(a) The President had been definitely hit by frames 224-25 when he emerges from behind a sign with his hands clutching at his throat.

(b) After Governor Connally straightened up at frames 224-26 he starts a turn to the right. As a result of this turn, at no time after frame 236 was Governor Connally in a position such that a bullet fired from the presumed site of the assassin would have caused the wound in the chest cavity which Governor Connally sustained--that is, after frame 236 the Governor presented a side view to the assassin rather than a back view. 1/

1/ Mr. Specter disagrees.

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[illegible] and feels the Governor chest wound up to 238.

[illegible]ng that bullet 399 does not appear to have [illegible]ruth in describing 399 as "the bullet re- [illegible]len Specter tried to but could not prove [illegible]nally's stretcher at Parkland Hospital [illegible]ase rested on the joint assumptions, among [illegible]s wrist but his fifth rib and left femur [illegible]he thigh wound and onto the stretcher

(c) In many frames up to 250, the Governor's wrist is held in a position which exposed him to the type of wrist wounds he actually received.

(d) After viewing the films and slides, the Governor was of the opinion that he had been hit by frame 231.

(e) The Governor stated that after being hit, he looked to his right, looked to his left and then turned to his right. He felt the President might have been hit by frame 190. He heard only two shots and felt sure that the shots he heard were the first and third shots. He is positive that he was hit after he heard the first shot, i.e., by the second shot, and by that shot only.

In a discussion after the conference Drs. Light and Dolce expressed themselves as being very strongly of the opinion that Connally had been hit by two different bullets, principally on the ground that the bullet recovered from Connally's stretcher could not have broken his radius without having suffered more distortion. Dr. Olivier withheld a conclusion until he has had the opportunity to make tests on animal tissue and bone with the actual rifle.

If the conference of April 14 was destructive of the case being fabricated against Oswald, the conference of April 21 was worse, as Eisenberg's memo reveals. See p. 56. Of course, it was nothing new that wound ballistics experts could not accept as fact that 399 had struck a wrist; it is common knowledge and experience that even jacketed bullets do not cause such substantial bone damage and suffer no distortion. All the expert testimony before the Commission was to this effect. But consider what this conference says of the Commission's investigation:

—Dr. Dolce, who "was very strongly of the opinion" that 399 "could not have" caused the wrist wound, was never called to testify before the Commission. The Report and the published evidence are silent about his strong dissent from this finding essential to the government's case;

—Dr. Light, who agreed with Dr. Dolce, did testify before the Commission but was never asked why he felt 399 could not have wounded the wrist. In response to Specter's hypothetical question, Dr. Light indicated that the passage of a single bullet through the two victims was a possibility based on the circumstances outlined by Specter (e. g., that 399 was found on Connally's stretcher!). Specter even had the audacity to ask Light, "And what about that whole bullet [399] leads you to believe that the one bullet caused the President's neck wound and all of the wounds on Governor Connally?" Light's reply was polite but firm: "Nothing about that bullet. Mainly the position in which they were seated in the automobile." (5H95). Thus Dr. Light's expert opinion was kept carefully kept out of the record;

—Dr. Olivier's tests, in anticipation of which he withheld an opinion at this conference, produced nothing but mangled, distorted bullets (CE's 853, 856, 857). Specter never asked Olivier if 399 could have done what the official theory demands and emerged in such perfect condition;

—Nothing was done to investigate the suggestion of the wound ballistics experts that Connally might have been hit by 2 separate bullets, a possibility incompatible with the lone assassin finding. Particularly helpful in this area might have been the spectrographic and NAA tests so arefully kept out of the record.

This memo takes criticism of Specter's Commission work out of the realm of "Monday morning quarterbacking." Specter <u>knew</u> the fatal flaws in his theory at the very time he was trying to build a record in support of that theory; he <u>knew</u> what scientific tests had to be done, which experts had to be called. He ignored the flaws, ignored the tests and ignored the experts and devised a solution to the crime he had to know was impossible.

And can it be regarded as anything less than culpable that, with a record like this, especially a suppressed memo of a secret conference like this, the authors of the Report could write: "All the evidence indicated that the bullet found on the Governor's stretcher could have caused all his wounds"? (R95).

FD-302 (Rev. 3-1-6)

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The following
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November 29, 1963, whic
of Governor JOHN B. CON
1963.

Dr. JACK REYN
accompanied this x-ray

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on 11/29/63 at Dallas

by Special Agent VINCENT E. D

This document contains neither recommendat
your agency; it and its contents are not to be